

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: ERNST BLAHA ET AL-1 (PCT)  
PCT No.: PCT/AT01/00088 FILED: MARCH 26, 2001  
TITLE: A CARD SHUFFLER

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

BOX PCT  
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
P.O. Box 2327  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Sir:

Preliminary to Examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Page 1, after the title, please insert as follows:

--CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Applicants claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 of Austrian Application No. A 634/2000 filed April 12, 2000. Applicants also claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §120 of PCT/AT01/00088 filed March 26, 2001. The international application under PCT article 21(2) was not published in English.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 3-9 as follows:

3. (Amended) A card shuffler as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the card storage means (42) for shuffled

cards is provided for the stack-wise removal of cards (13) with a U-shaped table (43) for receiving the cards (13) whose one wall adjacent to the output device comprises a slot for pushing through the cards (13) which is in alignment with the nip gap of the grip rollers (40).

4. (Amended) A card shuffler as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the card storage means (42') for the one-by-one removal of cards is provided with a gap (50) which is adjacent to the nip gap of the grip rollers (40), is limited by an inclined downwardly leading wall (49) and is further limited by a shoe (47) spring-loaded against the inclined wall (49), with an output slot (73) for the cards being provided between the lower end of the inclined wall (49) and a base plate, with the lower edge of the inclined wall (49) being provided with removal recess (72) which is open on its edge.

5. (Amended) A card shuffler as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the compartments (69) of the shuffling storage means (2') are at least partly open at their end opposite of the output end and the output device is provided with an oscillatingly drivable lever (35, 36) which engages in the opening opposite of the output end of a compartment (69) of the shuffling storage means (2') which is in the output position and pushes the content of said compartment (69) between grip rollers (40) disposed before the output end of said compartment (69).

6. (Amended) A card shuffler as claimed in claim 1, in which the shuffling storage means (2') is formed by a drum (2), characterized in that the drum (2) is provided with a gear rim (70) which is in engagement with a drivable pinion (4).

7. (Amended) A card shuffler as claimed in claim 1, in which the shuffling storage means (2') is formed by a drum (2), characterized in that the radially outer openings of the compartments (69) of the drum (2) are covered by means of springs (52) which are provided with nose-like shapings (55) at their free end.

8. (Amended) A card shuffler as claimed in claim 1, in which the shuffling storage means (2') is formed by a drum (2), characterized in that retainer springs (51) are disposed in the compartments (69) of the drum (2), which retainer springs are pretensioned against the opposite wall of the respective compartment (69) and are preferably provided with an arc-shaped arrangement.

9. (Amended) A card shuffler as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that a sensor (24) for recognizing the card symbols is provided which is connected with a device for monitoring the cards (13) located in the game, with the sensor (24) preferably being disposed in the zone of the input apparatus.

A marked-up version is shown as Exhibit A.

REMARKS

By this Preliminary Amendment, a cross-reference to related applications has been inserted in page 1. Claims 3-9 have been amended so that the multiple dependency of these dependent claims has been removed to avoid the surcharge associated therewith. No new matter has been introduced. Entry of this amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,  
ERNST BLAHA ET AL.

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Enclosure: Exhibit A

EXPRESS MAIL NO. **EL 871 448 403 US**

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Lisa L. Vulpis

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE  
TO CLAIMS 3-9

4. A card shuffler as claimed in claim 1 [or 2], characterized in that the card storage means (42') for the one-by-one removal of cards s provided with a gap (50) which is adjacent to the nip gap of the grip rollers (40), is limited by an inclined downwardly leading wall (49) and is further limited by a shoe (47) spring-loaded against the inclined wall (49), with an output slot (73) for the cards being provided between the lower end of the inclined wall (49) and a base plate, with the lower edge of the inclined wall (49) being provided with removal recess (72) which is open on its edge.

6. A card shuffler as claimed in [one of the claims 1 to 6] claim 1, in which the shuffling storage means (2') is formed by a drum (2), characterized in that the drum (2) is provided with a gear rim (70) which is in engagement with a drivable pinion (4).

8. A card shuffler as claimed in [one of the claims 1 to 6] claim 1, in which the shuffling storage means (2') is formed by a drum (2), characterized in that retainer springs (51) are disposed in the compartments (69) of the drum (2), which retainer springs are pretensioned against the opposite wall of the

respective compartment (69) and are preferably provided with an arc-shaped arrangement.

9. A card shuffler as claimed in [one of the claims 1 to 8] claim 1, characterized in that a sensor (24) for recognizing the card symbols is provided which is connected with a device for monitoring the cards (13) located in the game, with the sensor (24) preferably being disposed in the zone of the input apparatus.